United Nations A/51/658/Add.3

General Assembly
Fifty-first session

Distr.: General

21 May 1997
Original: English

Agenda item 125 (a)

Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991): United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Summary

The present addendum is submitted pursuant to General Assembly decision 51/440 of 16 December 1996, in which it requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to take immediate action to recover the overpayment of mission subsistence allowance at the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission and to report to the General Assembly, no later than 31 May 1997, on the results of the actions taken for its recovery as well as on the comprehensive review of the policies of the Organization in respect of compensatory time off and mission subsistence allowance.

97-13377 (E) 270597 290597

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1 - 3	3
II.	Compensatory time off policy in special missions	4 - 7	3
III.	Mission subsistence allowance	8 - 9	3

Annexes

I.	General conditions of the occasional recuperation break policy	4
II.	Principal features of mission subsistence allowance	5

I. Introduction

1. The present addendum is submitted pursuant to General Assembly decision 51/440 of 16 December 1996, in which it requested the Secretary-General, *inter alia*, to take immediate action to recover the overpayment of mission subsistence allowance, estimated at over $844,000, and to report to the General Assembly, no later than 31 May 1997, on the results of the actions taken for its recovery as well as on the comprehensive review of the policies of the Organization in respect of compensatory time off and mission subsistence allowance.

2. The information regarding the actions taken to recover the overpayment was provided to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in the context of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (A/51/658/Add.1 and 2) and is reflected in paragraphs 9 through 11 of the Advisory Committee's report on the item (A/51/683/Add.1).

3. The present addendum provides information on the review and clarification of the Organization's policies concerning compensatory time off and mission subsistence allowance.

II. Compensatory time off policy in special missions

4. In consideration of the health and well-being of staff members and in the interest of the Organization, a new policy of granting occasional recuperation breaks was instituted and replaces all previous regimes of supplementary leave such as compensatory time off or rest and recuperation granted to internationally recruited staff members in the special missions.

5. The policy with respect to occasional recuperation breaks provides streamlined, clear and consistent guidelines for all peacekeeping missions. Occasional recuperation breaks are granted to internationally recruited civilian personnel holding United Nations appointments in any special mission. The policy is designed to enable staff members to take a regular period of time off while on mission service to recuperate and ensure their optimal performance.

6. In summary, a staff member would normally be eligible for an occasional recuperation break every three calendar months, provided he or she has worked a total of 10 working days over and above the office's required number of working days during the preceding three-month period. The general conditions of the policy are provided in annex I.

7. In January 1997, the revised policy was communicated to all peacekeeping operations and all special missions by the Field Administration and Logistics Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

III. Mission subsistence allowance

8. It may be recalled that, in his report to the General Assembly (A/50/797) on the entitlements of staff assigned to peacekeeping missions, including mission subsistence allowance, the Secretary-General presented a comprehensive overview of all facets of the entitlements of staff assigned to United Nations peacekeeping missions, including the establishment and application of mission subsistence allowance. That report was considered by the Advisory Committee in November 1996 and is currently being considered by the Fifth Committee.

9. The operational guidelines concerning mission subsistence allowance were reviewed jointly by the Office of Human Resources Management and the Field Administration and Logistics Division, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, with a view to streamlining and clarifying payment of the allowance. While the final version is subject to staff-management consultations, the principal features of mission subsistence allowance are given in annex II.

Annex I
General conditions of the occasional recuperation break policy

1. A staff member will normally be eligible for an occasional recuperation break every three calendar months, provided he or she has worked a total of 10 working days over and above the office's required number of working days during the preceding three-month period. Official holidays during which a staff member is required to report for a full day of work are to be counted towards the 10 additional working days.

2. Occasional recuperation breaks are computed in blocks of three months and only at the end of the block, which does not have to begin on the first of the month. There is a minimum of three calendar months between each occasional recuperation break award.

3. Each occasional recuperation break grant is for five working days. Since the intent of the policy is to allow staff members to recuperate from arduous service, occasional recuperation breaks cannot be accrued, accumulated or carried forward from one three-month block to the next or from one peacekeeping or other special field operation to another.

4. Occasional recuperation breaks must be taken shortly after they have been earned, and the management of the mission must plan its human resource needs accordingly. Once a staff member has earned his or her break, that award cannot thereafter be forfeited.

5. For staff members serving in remote districts or regions, a maximum of two days may be added to compensate the staff member for the time required to travel to and from the outlying district or regional office to a location at which transportation is readily available. If the staff member's actual travel time to and from the outlying location is less than two days, he or she is entitled only to the actual travel time utilized, calculated in half-day increments.

6. If the staff member has earned an occasional recuperation break prior to the completion of the three-month qualifying period, the staff member may not take the break until that period has elapsed. If because of an emergency the staff member must leave the duty station after having earned an occasional recuperation break but prior to having taken it, the break is not affected and may, in fact, be taken in conjunction with emergency annual or special leave.

7. An occasional recuperation break may be granted only following written verification and certification by the staff member's supervisor and the Chief of Section that the staff member was required to work each of the additional 10 days and that he or she did in fact work a full day in each instance. Without such certification, no occasional recuperation break can be granted.

8. If a staff member takes any annual leave other than emergency leave outside the duty station during the three-month qualifying period, a new qualifying period will begin when the staff member reports for duty after the leave. However, if the staff member is requested to travel within the duty station or area of operation on official United Nations business and does not take additional time off while on official travel, there is no break in the qualifying three-month block. Furthermore, if the staff member remains in the country of the duty station, he or she may take up to three annual leave days without there being a break in the qualifying period.

9. Mission subsistence allowance is payable during occasional recuperation breaks except for days that the staff member spends at his or her parent duty station. Mission subsistence allowance is also payable for the time required to travel to and from a location at which transportation to leave the mission area is readily available, subject to the limits set forth in paragraph 5 above.

10. Subject to the exigencies of mission service, occasional recuperation breaks may be combined with annual leave, family visit and home leave travel.

11. Occasional recuperation breaks do not affect the eligibility of the staff member for or the periodicity of other travel or leave entitlements, nor is it chargeable to annual leave.

12. No travel cost is borne by the Organization for the purpose of occasional recuperation breaks. The staff member is free to choose his or her place of recuperation.

Annex II
Principal features of mission subsistence allowance

Definition

1. The mission subsistence allowance is a daily fixed allowance representing the total contribution of the Organization towards living expenses incurred by staff members in a mission area in connection with their assignment to a special mission.

Eligibility

2. A mission subsistence allowance is payable to staff members recruited or assigned from outside the mission area in lieu of the entitlements that would normally apply to that particular duty station, such as the assignment grant, the mobility and hardship allowance and the post adjustment applicable to that location. When a mission has been designated as a special mission, the salary of the staff member assigned from another duty station continues to be subject to the post adjustment and allowances, if any, applicable at the duty station from which the staff member was assigned.

Administration of the payment of mission subsistence allowance

3. A mission subsistence allowance is payable to all international civilian staff, civilian police and military observers assigned to a special mission. The administration of the allowance in the mission is entrusted to the Chief Administrative Officer under the responsibility of the Headquarters department or office in charge of that mission. Generally, the allowance is supplemented by 10 per cent for staff members at the D-1 and D-2 levels and by 25 per cent for staff at the Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General levels.

4. When accommodation is provided by the United Nations, a non-accommodation mission subsistence allowance rate is payable. In the absence of the establishment of a non-accommodation rate, the rate payable for mission subsistence allowance will be reduced by 50 per cent, regardless of the standard of accommodation provided.

5. A staff member travelling on official business requiring an overnight stay at a location other than his or her duty station within the mission area may receive, in addition to the usual mission subsistence allowance, reimbursement for accommodation at the overnight location. This reimbursement shall be subject to submission of receipts for the overnight stay and to the ceiling established in the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance rate applicable to the location of the overnight stay.

6. A staff member travelling on official business outside the mission area will receive the daily subsistence allowance promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission for the designated travel location. The cost of accommodation in the mission area will be reimbursed subject to submission of supporting documentation and to the ceiling established in the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance rate.

7. Mission subsistence allowance remains payable when a staff member is on sick leave within the mission area. A staff member hospitalized in the mission area is entitled to one third of the mission subsistence allowance since accommodation and meals in the hospital are covered by health insurance. In such cases, the United Nations will pay for accommodation subject to submission of supporting documentation and to the ceiling established in the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance rate. Mission subsistence allowance is not payable when a staff member is hospitalized or on sick leave outside the mission area. In such cases, the United Nations will pay for accommodation subject to submission of supporting documentation and to the ceiling established in the accommodation portion of the mission subsistence allowance rate.